



4.2.7 La Paz County

Geography

La Paz is Arizona's newest county and is located in the central-western part of the State. The County is comprised of 4,513 square miles. The Colorado River, which generally forms the County's western boundary, is the largest watercourse flowing through the County. The County is located within the Sonoran Desert with climate that is typically hot and dry during the summer and mild during the winter.

Population

The County's population was 21,190 in 2005. The County grew at a rate of 7.5% between 2000 and 2005, compared to the State's overall growth of 17.8%. The populations of the major communities located in this region of Arizona are reflective of this moderate growth trend. Parker and Quartzite are the two most populous incorporated communities, and the small Town of Parker is the county seat. The Colorado River Indian Community has the highest population amongst the County's jurisdictions. While experiencing a growth rate that exceeds the State average, the County's small communities are not expected to experience substantial gains in resident population.

La Paz County Population, 1990-2040							
Jurisdiction	1990	2000	2005	2010	2020	2030	2040
La Paz County	13,844	19,715	21,190	22,632	25,487	28,074	29,715
Colorado River Reservation	7,865	7,466	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Parker	2,897	3,140	3,280	3,820	4,818	5,357	5,581
Quartzsite	1,876	3,354	3,600	3,668	5,498	6,497	6,921
Note: Figures for 1990, 2000, 2005 from Arizona Dept. of Commerce. Figures for 2010-2040 from AZ DES (projections date from 1997).							
Source: Arizona Department of Commerce, May 2003; Arizona Department of Economic Security, February 1997.							

Economy & Labor Force

The 7,524 people representing the civilian labor force of the County are employed primarily in the tourism, agriculture, and retail trade sectors of the economy. With an unemployment rate of 6.9%, the County has a slightly higher ratio of unemployed workers than the State as a whole (4.6%).

Historic Hazard Events

During the development of the original State of Arizona All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, a list of historic hazard events was compiled. Most counties researched local records and governmental databases to update and add records of recent hazards to the state compiled list for use in their plans. Additional hazard records were researched using the same criteria, with the exception that all damages greater than \$1 were included. Therefore, due to the variety of data sources and criteria, it should be kept in mind that the numbers reported reflect the availability of such data from those sources and the numbers are expected to under-predict the losses actually sustained over the past 30 to 40 years. A more thorough search for historic data in future planning efforts is mentioned in the county plans and encouraged by ADEM.

It is our hope that this data coupled with other risk assessment information will prove to be instrumental in assisting the County and State in future planning and mitigation efforts. We believe this can happen by this data accurately indicating which hazards we are most susceptible to; how damaging these hazards can be to us; and the damage costs or costs avoided through future mitigation projects.

Historic Record of Disaster Events in La Paz County								
Event Type	Statewide or Multiple County, Incl La Paz				Substantially La Paz			
	Total	Fataliti	Injuries	Loss \$	Total	Fatalit	Injuries	Loss \$
Dam Failure	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Drought	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding/Flash Flooding	8	19	112	533,100,000	19	1	12	7,310,000
Hazardous Materials Incid.	3	0	0	0	6	2	4	0
Thunderstorms/High Winds	0	0	0	0	45	0	12	570,000
Tropical Storms / Hurricane	8	23	0	380,800,000	0	0	0	0
Wildfire	16	0	0	0	12	0	0	0
Note: "Statewide or Multiple County, Incl La Paz" events met the 1 or more of the following criteria: at least 1 injury and/or fatality or Historical Significance. All had at least \$50,000 in reported Losses. "Substantially La Paz" events met 1 or more of the following criteria: at least 1 reported injury and/or fatality or Historical Significance. No minimum dollar amount for Losses was used. All information is derived from the best data available								
Source: La Paz County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, FEMA Approved March 2007.								



Vulnerability

La Paz County includes a small number and modest proportion of population that is potentially vulnerable to hazards. La Paz County's resident population (21,190) occupies only a small share (.35%) of Arizona's total, and reflects a comparatively aged population, with only 19.7% of its residents under the age of 18, while 29% are 65 and over.

La Paz County Populations Potentially Vulnerable to Hazards, 2005				
Jurisdiction	Population			
	Total	Under 18 yrs	65+ years	Below Poverty Level
Arizona	6,044,985	1,607,966	773,758	840,253
La Paz County	21,190	4,173	6,145	3,645
As a % of County	100%	19.7%	29%	17.2%
As a % of State	.35%	.26%	.79%	.43%
Source: Estimates based on US Census Bureau data, 2007. Poverty Level as defined by US Census Bureau.				

La Paz County Dwelling Units Potentially Vulnerable to Hazards, 2005		
Jurisdiction	Housing Units	
	Total	Built Before 1970
Arizona	2,544,806	490,710
La Paz County	15,443	2,794
Source: Estimates based on US Census Bureau. Data, 2007.		

Hazards & Mitigation Strategy

Using the results of the County's vulnerability and capability analysis and the goals and objectives, a list of actions/projects was formulated. The actions/projects were then evaluated and ranked using the STAPLEE procedure. Below are the top ranking identified hazards and their actions/projects as indicated in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan approved by FEMA on March 26, 2007:

Drought
Flooding/Flash Flooding
Wildfire

Mitigation Strategy Progress

Through development of this Plan, the need to significantly refine the goals/objectives and actions/projects in our original Plan was evident. We believe this need is a result of the determination to focus the Plan more on natural caused hazards as other hazards are covered in their appropriate plans (i.e. health, terrorism, etc.). There is also much to be said about the increased amount of information available regarding hazard mitigation planning.

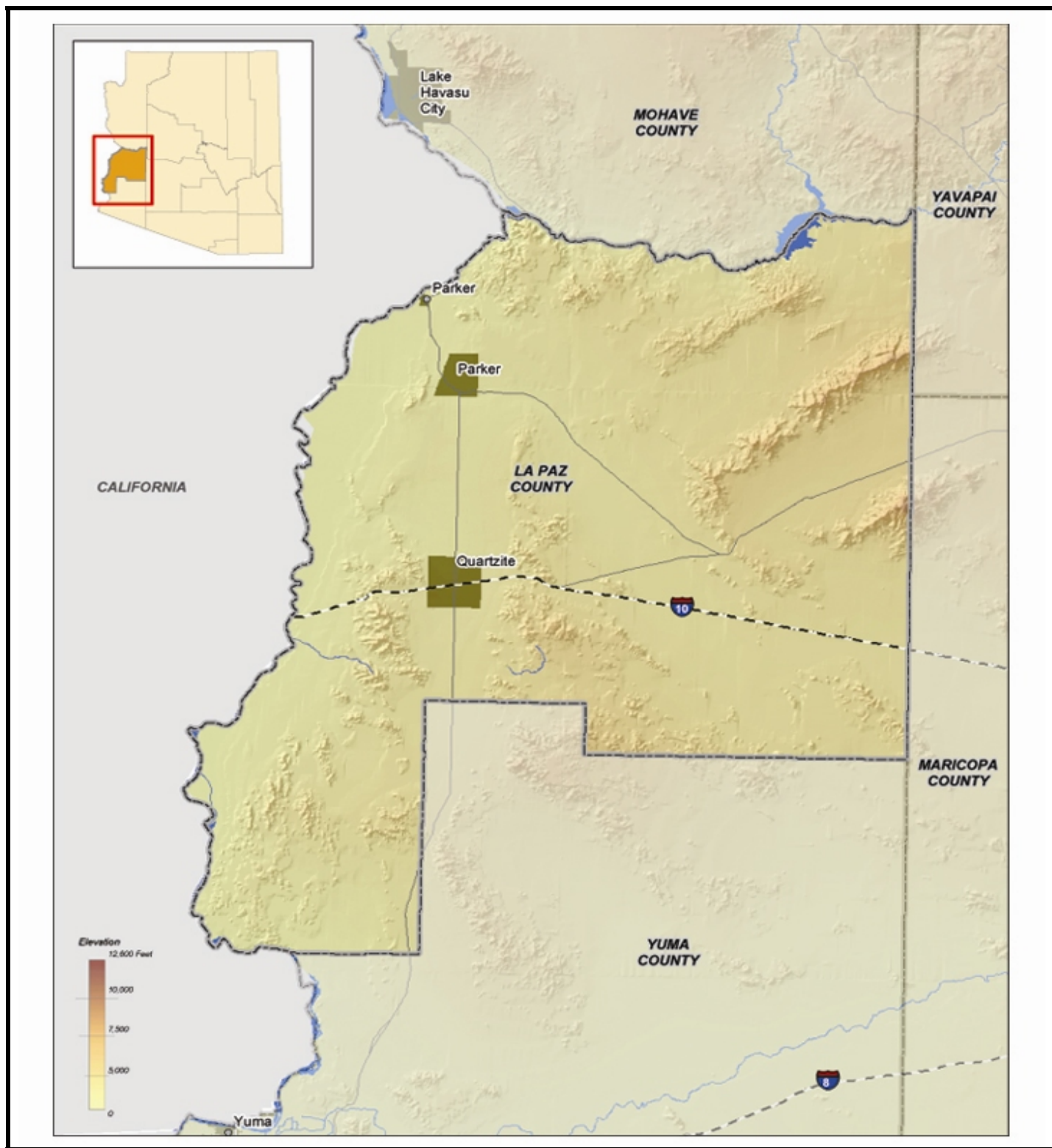
To encourage our jurisdictions to re-evaluate their Plan's Mitigation Strategy as well, each County was asked to indicate their action/project progress since the development of their Plan.

No information was provided by the County.

Other Planning Mechanisms

During their planning process, the County staff reviewed and evaluated their resources and capabilities in the areas of Existing Plans, Policies and Ordinances; Technical Staff/Resources and Financial Resources. Although all resources are important to a community's ability to mitigate the effects of natural and human-caused hazards, we elected to ask the County to complete a survey indicating their legal and regulatory resources to be included in the Plan.

No information was provided by the County.



LEGEND

- Interstate
- Highway
- City
- Major Stream
- County
- Lake
- County Seat



State of Arizona
Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

Map 9 Major Features of La Paz County